Of the Moderate Musician (or Pastime Pianist)

By Nick Takaki

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Music, as a pastime, serves for relaxation, revelation, and elevation. Its chief use for relaxation is emotional release; in revelation, is emotional expression; in elevation, it is emotional discovery. For rational lay can disparage it as mere soporifics\*, and egoists can become lost in pure narcissistic self-expression\*\*, and composers or professionals squander, through overindulgence, the revelation\*\*\*; but the pastime pianist and the longtime listener simultaneously stimulate all three without being smothered by any. To spend too much time in music is to forget the real world; to spend too little is to stumble in silent dark; to balance the two is to stride in absolute perfection. Crafty men scoff at music, simple men commend music, and wise men understand, for it teaches neither submission nor domination over emotion, but rather the delicate symbiosis or heart and head, and it teaches to expose, express, and expunge the idiosyncratic inconsistencies between the two. Play music not to garner affectations of affection from peers, nor to exult in the euphonious epiphanies to the point of excess, or to indulge to the point of an anarchic catharsis which purges all that which distinguishes mankind from machinery. Nay, there is no recalcitrance or stolidity or uncertainty of heart which may not be softened or seduced or eroded into recognizable shape by careful application of music. By music in moderation, the emotion may be released and removed; by music in moderation, it can be revealed and communicated; by music in moderation, it can be discovered and understood. So, by music as a pastime, can every aspect of the heart be given special attention.

\*people who say music is stupid

\*\*i.e. death metal

\*\*\*those who get so wrapped up in theory and technique that they miss the point